

## Nevada County Transportation Commission

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County. NCTC coordinates state and federal transportation programs for Nevada County, the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee.

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The Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter is published bimonthly. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please write or call the Nevada County Transportation Commission office.

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# Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

Issue 18

November 2003

“Creating a better future by building upon successes of the past”



## Telecare Serving Our Community



*Telecare van picks up seniors at their residence*



*Telecare transports riders to local shopping centers*



*Telecare transports riders to doctor's appointments*

## Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

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**Gold Country Telecare** is a private non-profit agency providing door-to-door paratransit service to qualified seniors and persons with disabilities residing in Western Nevada County. Telecare also provides transportation services in Truckee through a volunteer program.

The early days of paratransit service in Western Nevada County consisted of Dial-a-Ride with 6 vehicles, Telecare with 3 vehicles plus a volunteer organization of 40+ drivers using their personal vehicles. Annual ridership in FY 1991/92 for the combined services was 42,500 versus 63,427 in FY 2002/03. Currently Telecare operates all of the paratransit services with 16 vehicles and paid drivers, supplemented by a pool of enthusiastic volunteer drivers and their vehicles.

A major change in the focus of paratransit service came with the passage of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1989. Under ADA, agencies that operated public transit services were required to also provide “complementary paratransit services” within the service area to persons whose disability prevents them from utilizing regular fixed-route bus service. “Complementary” in this context means that the service is intended to “complement” fixed-route bus service.

Telecare is contracted through the Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation to provide door-to-door paratransit services to “ADA qualified individuals” in Western Nevada County.

The ADA service area is defined as a corridor three-quarters of a mile on either side of each Gold Country Stage bus route. The ADA-mandated service area includes the Grass Valley/Nevada City urban area, Rough and Ready, Penn Valley, Lake Wildwood, Loma Rica, and Cedar Ridge. Stage Routes 5 to Auburn, Rt. 10 to North San Juan, and Rt. 12 to Colfax are exempt from this requirement since they are defined under ADA as “commuter routes”. “Commuter bus service” is a fixed route bus service characterized by service predominantly in one direction during peak periods, limited stops, limited route structure, use of multi-ride tickets, and routes of extended length, usually between the central business district and out-lying areas.

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**Recent Changes** – To address a projected budget shortfall, the Operational Policy Committee, which oversees transit and paratransit services in Western Nevada County, recently made significant changes to Gold Country Stage services and reduced the level of paratransit service being provided by Gold Country Telecare effective October 1, 2003. Consistent with the requirements of the ADA, eligibility for



*Telecare transports passengers in wheelchairs with ease*

Telecare service is now based on whether the client has a physical or mental disability that precludes their use of Gold Country Stage. Telecare's highest priority is to serve clients whose trips are within the "ADA Corridor". ADA-eligible persons now qualify for discount fares on Gold Country Stage buses (\$.50 for Grass Valley/Nevada City area trips, and \$1.00 for longer distance trips). All Gold Country Stage buses are wheelchair accessible.

In an effort to provide as much service as possible with the dollars available, Telecare is now serving Alta Sierra and the SR 49 corridor between Lime Kiln Road and Grass Valley with a "flex route". This is a scheduled service that enables passengers to travel to specific destinations in the Grass Valley/Nevada City area and it runs four times a day. If you would like further information on this or any of the Telecare services, please call their office at 272-1710.

Gold Country Telecare's **Mission Statement** is: "To provide transportation for Nevada County seniors and people with disabilities, enabling them to maintain their independence and participate in the community." In addition to its contract with Nevada County, Gold Country Telecare offers the following programs to fulfill their mission:

- **Senior Voucher Program** – Established and presently funded through Area 4 Agency on Aging (A4AA) allows low-income seniors, 60 years and older, to purchase booklets of vouchers for travel on Telecare. Each voucher provides a 50% discount on a regular one-way fare.
- **Senior Sunday Service Program** – Established and presently funded through A4AA enables seniors (60 and older) transportation access to Sunday activities, since the local fixed route public transportation does not run on Sundays.
- **T.H.E. Van Program** – Established through funding from the Catholic Healthcare West Community Grants Program, provides low or no-cost transportation to low-income seniors and persons with disabilities to predetermined health and

enrichment services such as cardiac/pulmonary rehab programs, cancer treatments, warm water pool therapies, and a nutrition program at the local Senior Center. This program averages 150 boardings per month.

- **Adopt-The-Van-Program** – An in-house revenue program that allows local businesses and organizations to advertise on certain Telecare vehicles for a financial donation. This currently assists in funding T.H.E. Van Program.
- **Neighbor-To-Neighbor Volunteer Program** – Provides transportation to ambulatory seniors (60 years and older) and disabled persons for trips outside the local Grass Valley area and outside the ADA corridor.
- **Truckee Volunteer Program** – Offers transportation for seniors (60 and older) and disabled persons to local or out-of-area medical trips.
- **Special Events** – Transportation to special community events throughout the year, such as Fall Color Run in October and A Christmas Light Run in December.
- **Charters** – Offers day, evening and weekend charters to the general public.



Funding for Telecare come from numerous sources: Fee-for-service contract with Nevada County, grants through Area 4 Agency on Aging, United Way of Nevada County, FTA Section 5310 Program, Catholic Healthcare West Community Grants Program, Truckee-Tahoe Community Foundation, Adopt-The-Van-Program, fundraising letters, and donations.

Telecare is a private non-profit agency that began as a church volunteer noon meal service group in 1974, and shortly thereafter started volunteer transportation for seniors. Telecare was incorporated in 1977. In the mid-1980's transportation services were expanded to include disabled persons and paid drivers were added to the staff. Today Gold Country Telecare, Inc. provides specialized transportation in Western Nevada County and Truckee. They are governed by a Board of Directors and managed by an Executive Director and Development Director. Staff consists of paid employees and volunteers, which include drivers, dispatchers, administrative and management personnel. **NCTC**

### Upcoming NCTC Meetings

**The next two meetings of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) are scheduled as follows:**

**Wednesday, November 19, 2003 at 8:30 a.m., Nevada County Board Chambers, 950 Maidu Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Nevada City, CA**

**Wednesday, December 17, 2003 at 8:30 a.m., Grass Valley Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, CA**

**As** we continue our series on "The Bridges of Nevada County" (see September 2003 newsletter for first story), this month we feature the **Donner Summit Rainbow Bridge**, located west of Donner Lake off Interstate 80 (take Donner Pass Road or Soda Springs exit along old US Route 40).

The automobile era of the early 1900's brought a new creativity in bridge design, as the public desired more eye-pleasing bridges than the boxy metal truss designs used for train bridges. During this time California introduced the reinforced concrete bridge to the United States. Concrete was strong when reinforced, cheaper than steel, a material easy to produce in California, and gave the bridge engineers a newfound freedom to build a beautiful, yet durable, structure. The concrete arch design emerged in the early part of the century as a common but impressive style that became known as "classically Californian" throughout the country.



### Donner Summit Rainbow Bridge—

In 1926 the **Donner Summit "Rainbow Bridge"** was constructed overlooking Donner Lake. The design was the popular reinforced concrete arch. The bridge allowed for an alternate route over the Sierras as a part of the first transcontinental highway – The Lincoln Highway. The highway project was started in 1913 by several automobile industrialists who wanted to get Americans driving. The Lincoln Highway began in New York City and ended in San Francisco at the Ferry Building, traveling through a total of fourteen states. The route from central Nevada, over the Sierra Nevada Mountains to San Francisco, had two good passageways and the Lincoln Highway used both of them. The main route was over Donner Pass, while the other route wrapped around the south end of Lake Tahoe for those tourists desiring to visit the Lake. Boy Scouts erected memorial concrete posts along both routes in 1928, as the final marking of the Lincoln Highway.

The Rainbow Bridge was restored and basically rebuilt in 1995-96 as part of a Transportation Enhancement Activities grant obtained through the help of NCTC. Interpretive panels nearby tell the history and significance of Donner Pass. There has been a resurgence of tourism along the Lincoln Highway since the 1980's and 90's, and original signs and markers along the highway have been restored or replaced as communities take an interest in the historical significance of the route. A replica sign can be viewed at the Big Bend Ranger Station Museum, along with other artifacts.



*The concrete arch design of Rainbow Bridge*

Hiking or biking enthusiasts can visit the area by parking at the parking lot near Rainbow Bridge, and explore the bare rock nearby looking for Native American petroglyphs. Then hike up the hill and check out the abandoned train sheds, where you can enjoy spectacular views of Donner Lake below. There is a huge granite wall, before you enter the sheds, that was built by Chinese laborers and serves as a monument to their efforts.

The Rainbow Bridge is designated by Nevada County as a historic landmark. **NCTC**

*Side note:* America's very first reinforced concrete bridge was built in 1889 and still stands in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park – the Alvord Lake Bridge.

*Some information in this article was taken from livinggoldpress.com, Zephyr Outdoors, Byways 2001 – Kevin Patrick, and iup.edu. Bridge photos taken by Daniel Landon, Executive Director of NCTC.*

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

**A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE  
ANNUAL DETERMINATION OF  
UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS  
WILL BE HELD BY THE NCTC ON WEDNESDAY,  
DECEMBER 17, 2003 AT 9:00 A.M. IN THE  
GRASS VALLEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS,  
125 EAST MAIN STREET, GRASS VALLEY**

The purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive testimony identifying or commenting on unmet transit needs that may exist within Nevada County and that might be reasonable to meet.

The Commission's definition of "reasonable to meet" may take into consideration such factors as equity, timing, feasibility, community acceptance, economy (short-term and long-term), cost effectiveness, and other factors related to transit services deemed appropriate by the Commission.

Individuals, as well as representatives of groups interested in transportation, are invited to attend and participate. If you are unable to attend, you may write, phone, fax, or email your comments to:

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